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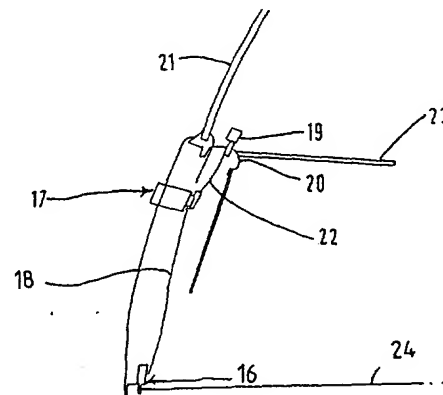
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(54) Motor vehicle rear door release

(57) A hatchback car has an internal handle (19) connected with a rear door latch (16) for use in an emergency to release the rear door and permit occupants of the car to escape at the rear of the car.

FIG. 2

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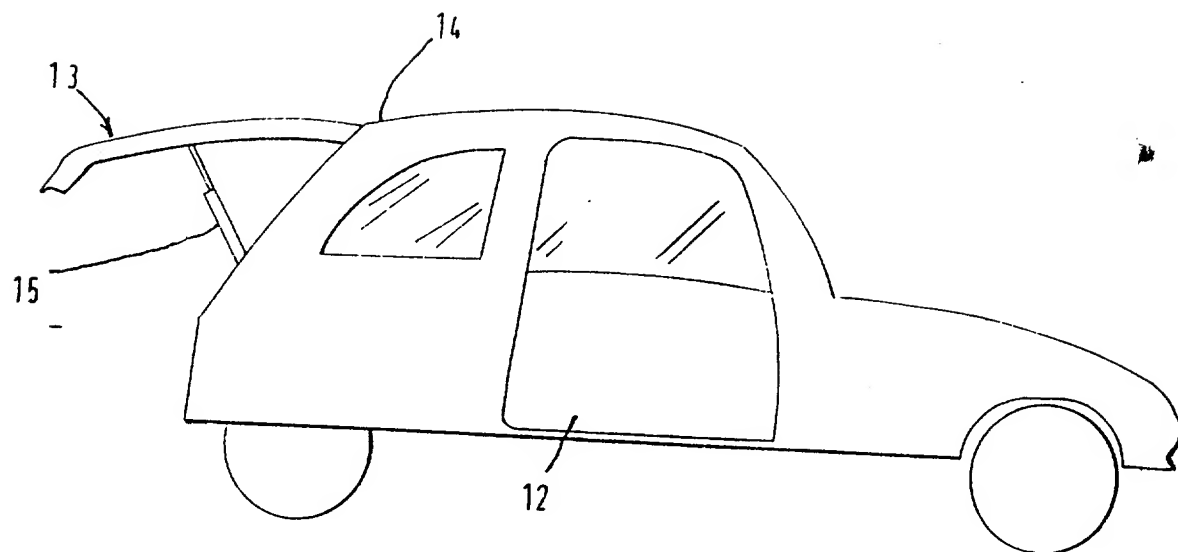


FIG. 1

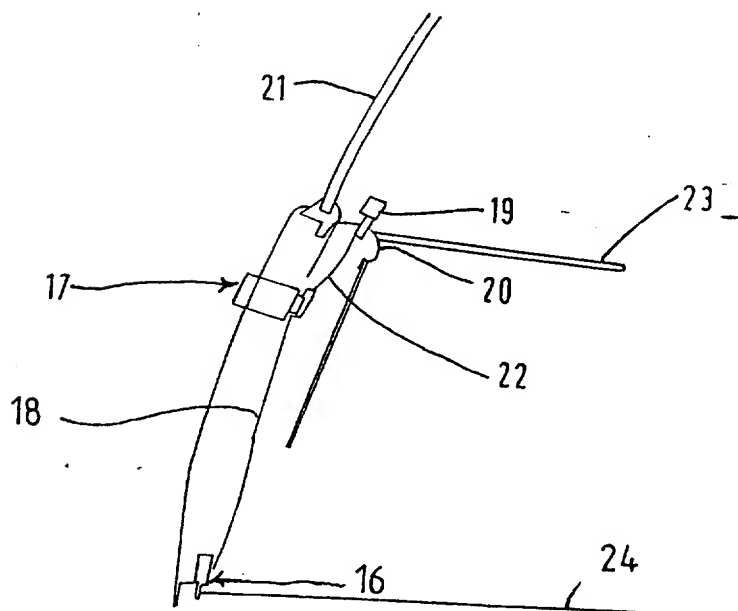


FIG. 2

SPECIFICATION

Motor vehicle

5 Description of invention

The present invention relates to a motor vehicle for use on roads and arranged for carrying a driver and up to seven passengers. Such a vehicle is hereinafter called a car.

- 10 The invention is particularly concerned with cars described as hatchbacks and other cars having a rear door connected with a body of the vehicle for swinging relative thereto about an axis which extends transversely of the body and is near to an upper margin of the rear door.

- 15 According to the invention, there is provided a car having a rear door as hereinbefore described, a rear door latch for latching the rear door in a closed position and a handle mounted on the rear door and connected with the rear door latch for operation thereof to release the latched door for opening, wherein said handle is accessible from inside a passenger compartment of the car whilst the rear door is closed.

- The rear door of a car in accordance with the invention can be opened by a passenger from inside the passenger compartment, who would thus be able to escape through the rear door, in the event of side doors of the vehicle body having become jammed in closed positions, in consequence of a collision. Even when a collision does not result in jamming of all side doors of the car, escape of passengers from a rear seat of the car may be difficult or impossible if the car has only two side doors and occupants of both front seats of the car are seriously injured.

- 35 Generally, the rear door of a car comprises a transparent panel. In this case, the handle preferably lies adjacent to a lower margin of the transparent panel.

- In a case where the car has a cover extending forwardly from the rear door above a load floor of the vehicle body, said handle is preferably disposed above the level of a rear margin of the cover.

- The car may further comprise a key-operated lock mechanism mounted in the rear door at a position spaced from the rear door latch and a linkage connecting said lock mechanism with the rear door latch, wherein the lock mechanism includes a key-receiving member which is accessible from outside the vehicle body and wherein said handle is connected with said linkage.

- 50 An example of a car embodying the present invention will now be described, with reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein:-

Figure 1 is a diagrammatic side elevation of the car with a rear door of the car partly open; and

- 55 *Figure 2* shows, on an enlarged scale, a cross-section through a part of the rear door in a vertical plane.

- The car illustrated in *Figure 1* is a three-door hatchback, including a body having two side doors, one only of which is shown at 12, and a single rear door 13. The rear door is hinged to the remainder of the vehicle body for swinging relative thereto about an axis 14 which is close to an upper margin of the door, when the door is closed. Telescopic struts 15 are arranged in a known manner to act in between the

door and the remainder of the vehicle body, to assist opening movement of the door and to restrict the speed at which the door can be closed.

- A latch 16 is mounted in the door 13 adjacent to a lower margin thereof for co-operation with a striker (not shown) fixed with respect to the vehicle body and positioned adjacent to the bottom of the rear opening defined by the body. There is also mounted in the rear door a cylinder lock mechanism 17 having a key-receiving member which is accessible from the outside of the vehicle body and presents a key-receiving slot (not shown). The key-receiving member is connected by a linkage 18 with the latch 16. The latch, lock mechanism and linkage 18 may be a known latch, lock mechanism and linkage respectively.

- A handle 19 is mounted in the rear door 13 at a position such that, when the rear door is closed, the handle is readily accessible from inside the passenger compartment defined by the vehicle body. In the example illustrated, the handle is mounted in an opening formed in a rail 20 of the frame which surrounds a glass panel 21 incorporated in the rear door. The rail 20 extends along a lower margin of the glass panel and the handle is conveniently mounted in the middle of that rail. The handle 19 is connected by a linkage 22 with the linkage 18 and thereby to the latch 16, in such a manner that the handle can remain stationary when the key-receiving member of the lock mechanism is turned to release the latch and that the handle can be raised to release the latch without turning the key-receiving member relative to the door. The connection between the linkages 22 and 18 may provide for lost motion. Additionally or alternatively, the linkage 22 may be flexible, so that it can readily accommodate upward movement of a lower end of the linkage 22 whilst the upper end thereof remains stationary.

- A cover 23 extends forwardly from the rail 20 over a load-floor 24 defined by the vehicle body. Such covers are generally provided to conceal from view any load carried on the floor 24. It will be noted that an upper part of the handle 19, which part constitutes a hand-grip, is spaced upwardly from the rail 20 and from the cover 23.

- If a passenger wishes to escape from the vehicle through the rear door opening, it is necessary only for that passenger to pull the handle 19 upwardly. This releases the latch 16 and springs in the struts 15 raise the rear door 13.

- The arrangement illustrated in the accompanying drawing may be modified by substituting for the handle 19 a handle which is pivoted to the rear door 13 and is arranged so that movement of a protruding part of the handle in a direction laterally of the vehicle releases the rear door latch.

- The features disclosed in the foregoing description, or the accompanying drawings, expressed in their specific forms or in terms of a means for performing the disclosed function, may, separately or any combination of such features, be utilised for realising the invention in diverse forms thereof.

CLAIMS

1. A car having a body, a rear door connected with the body for swinging relative thereto about an axis which extends transversely of the body and is
5 near to an upper margin of the rear door, a rear door latch for latching the rear door in a closed position relative to the body and a handle connected with the rear door latch for operation thereof to release the
10 latched door for opening, wherein said handle is accessible from inside a passenger compartment of the car whilst the rear door is closed.
2. A car according to Claim 1 wherein the rear door includes a transparent panel and the handle lies
15 adjacent to a lower margin of the transparent panel.
3. A car according to Claim 1 or Claim 2 wherein the body includes a floor for bearing a load carried in a rear part of the car, there is further provided a cover extending forwardly from the rear door above the
20 load floor and wherein said handle is disposed above the level of a rear margin of the cover.
4. A car according to any preceding Claim further comprising a key-operated lock mechanism mounted in the rear door at a position spaced from the rear
25 door latch and a linkage connecting said lock mechanism with the rear door latch, wherein the lock mechanism includes a key-receiving member which is accessible from outside the vehicle body and wherein said handle is connected with said linkage.
- 30 5. Any novel feature or novel combination of features disclosed herein or in the accompanying drawing.